ALBERTA HANSARD

ANNUAL REPORT
1985

86-06388/

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
ALBERTA

OFFICE OF
Alberta Hansard

Room 412
Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6 (403) 427-2490

April 4, 1986

TO THE HONOURABLE THE SPEAKER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY:

I have the honour to submit the annual report of Alberta Hansard for the calendar year ended December 31, 1985, as required by Standing Order 110.

Respectfully submitted,

Gary Garrison

Editor, Alberta Hansard

Alberta Hansard

ANNUAL REPORT

1985

Prepared for the Honourable Gerard Amerongen
Speaker of the Legislative Assembly
Legislative Assembly of Alberta

April 4, 1986

Alberta Hansard
Room 412 Legislature Building
Edmonton, Alberta
T5K 2B6

PUBLICATION OF ALBERTA HANSARD

Under the authority of Mr. Speaker and in accordance with Standing Orders 107, 108, and 109, there were 51 issues of Alberta Hansard published in 1985, reporting the proceedings of the Third Session of the 20th Legislature held during that year. Total number of pages published in 1985 was 1,350. In 1984 Hansard published 64 issues and 1,512 pages.

BOUND VOLUMES

Bound volumes for the Second Session of the 20th Legislature were distributed in July 1985. Each set consisted of two books, the first containing 900 pages of text and the second pages 901 through 1,512 and the index. There was an increase in the number of subscriptions to bound volumes for the Third Session of the 20th Legislature; this followed an increase in 1984 bound volume subscriptions over the previous year. The number of bound volume issues produced for the Third Session rose to 230 from 190 the previous year.

CIRCULATION AND SUBSCRIPTIONS

Basic printing volume during 1985 was 1,745 copies of each issue, divided as follows: 875 copies for distribution in the Legislature Building and over-the-counter sales, 640 copies for subscriptions, and 230 copies for binding. As in the past, adjustments were made to these numbers from week to week, to accommodate changes in the number of subscribers.

As the result of special requests made through the General Administration branch of the Legislative Assembly Office, the following additional copies of Hansard issues were printed and were paid for by those making the requests:

Date	Issue No.	No. of Copies
March 14	1	500
May 27	44	250

ARCHIVES

Seventy-four master tapes covering the 1985 sittings of the Legislature (March 14, 1985, to June 5, 1985) were deposited with the Provincial Archives on August 26, 1985. They have been assigned accession number 85.325 and are retrievable at the Provincial Archives by this number.

COMMITTEE REPORTING

Transcripts of committee meetings were again produced in-house and delivered to the office of the Clerk of Committees for distribution. Bound transcripts of 1985 meetings of the standing committees on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act, Legislative Offices, Members' Services, and Public Accounts were delivered to the Legislature Library, the Clerk of Committees, and the committee chairmen, as were the bound transcripts of meetings of the select special committees to search for and select an Ombudsman, an Auditor General, and a Chief Electoral Officer.

In addition to providing transcripts of standing and special committees of the Legislature, Hansard staff prepared for the Regulatory Reform Secretariat of the Department of Economic Development a 64-page transcript of a meeting between the government of Canada study team on regulatory matters, on behalf of the Ministerial Task Force on Program Review headed by the Hon. Erik Nielsen, and representatives of government of Alberta departments and agencies. Hansard was paid by the secretariat for performing this service.

As the following table summarizing committee transcription services indicates, the number of meetings held in 1985 was up slightly from 1984, even though there were no fall sittings. The 66 meetings for which transcripts were produced is well above the eight-year average of 48.

Name of Committee	Number of Meetings	Duration (Hours)
Special Standing Committee on Members' Services	9	14.35
Standing Committee on the Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act	24	35.91
Standing Committee on Law and Regulations	10	14.65
Standing Committee on Legislative Offices	10	11.31
Standing Committee on Private Bills	5	5.11
Standing Committee on Public Accounts	8	8.73
SUBTOTAL (STANDING COMMITTEES)	66	90.06
Comparable 1984	64	85.01
Select Special Auditor General Search Committee	4	4.78
Select Special Committee to Search for and Select a Chief Electoral Officer	3	2.88
Meeting on Federal and Provincial Regulatory Matters	1	5.26
TOTAL	74	102.98
Comparable 1984	66	85.96

HANSARD INDEX

Indexing of Alberta Hansard continued substantially unchanged during 1985. Cumulations of the index were provided during session to the Legislature Library for the use of members and others. Final cumulations were provided following the conclusion of the sittings. A bound index of the Hansard issues covering the Third Session of the 20th Legislature is scheduled for printing and distribution during the spring of 1986.

Reference services of the Hansard Librarian continued to be available to those seeking index information. During 1985, a total of 94 questions were answered: 69 from Assembly staff, nine from government departmental staff, and 16 from the general public.

The Librarian is also responsible for the preparation of a table showing the progress of Bills. This was published with most Monday issues of Alberta Hansard and in the final issue for 1985, dated June 5.

A study was conducted in 1985 of the advisability of transferring the production of the index from software currently running on the mainframe at the government computing centre at the Terrace Building to software to be run on an in-house microcomputer. Several advantages to an in-house system were identified: it would pay for itself over a three-year period; downtimes on the mainframe would be avoided; printouts would be produced on printing equipment already in the office, rather than having to be picked up from the Terrace Building; the software would allow faster production turnaround, which would make the index printout available to members more quickly; and the index data could be accessed on-line by anyone connected to the Assembly's computer system. This last advantage, however, would only be realized if a significant portion of the hard disk memory in the ICU in General Administration were dedicated to the Hansard index.

Specifications were written for new software, and various consultants were contacted and invited to submit proposals for hardware and software solutions. The

proposals were evaluated as to cost and suitability. It was decided, however, that the possibility of future enhancements to the Legislative Assembly's computer system as a whole made it inadvisable to proceed at this time with an in-house microcomputer to produce the index. If these enhancements are implemented, all the above advantages could be realized more efficiently than would have been possible otherwise.

ORGANIZATION AND STAFFING

Three changes in full-time staff positions occurred in 1985. First, Gary Garrison was appointed Editor of Alberta Hansard effective February 15, succeeding David Greer, whose three-month contract expired January 18 following a three-day extension. Sheila Unger resigned from the position of Production Supervisor, also effective February 15. She was succeeded by Carol Holowach on February 25.

Finally, Susan Peet resigned as Assistant Production Supervisor on July 27. A review of the duties assigned to that position was conducted thereafter, and the position was renamed Production Editor. Following an open competition, Kathryn Brink was appointed Production Editor on December 4.

During the latter months of 1985 the position descriptions of all other nonmanagement positions were reviewed and revised to reflect recent practice. A revised organization chart was drawn up as well; it is reproduced on page 6 of this report.

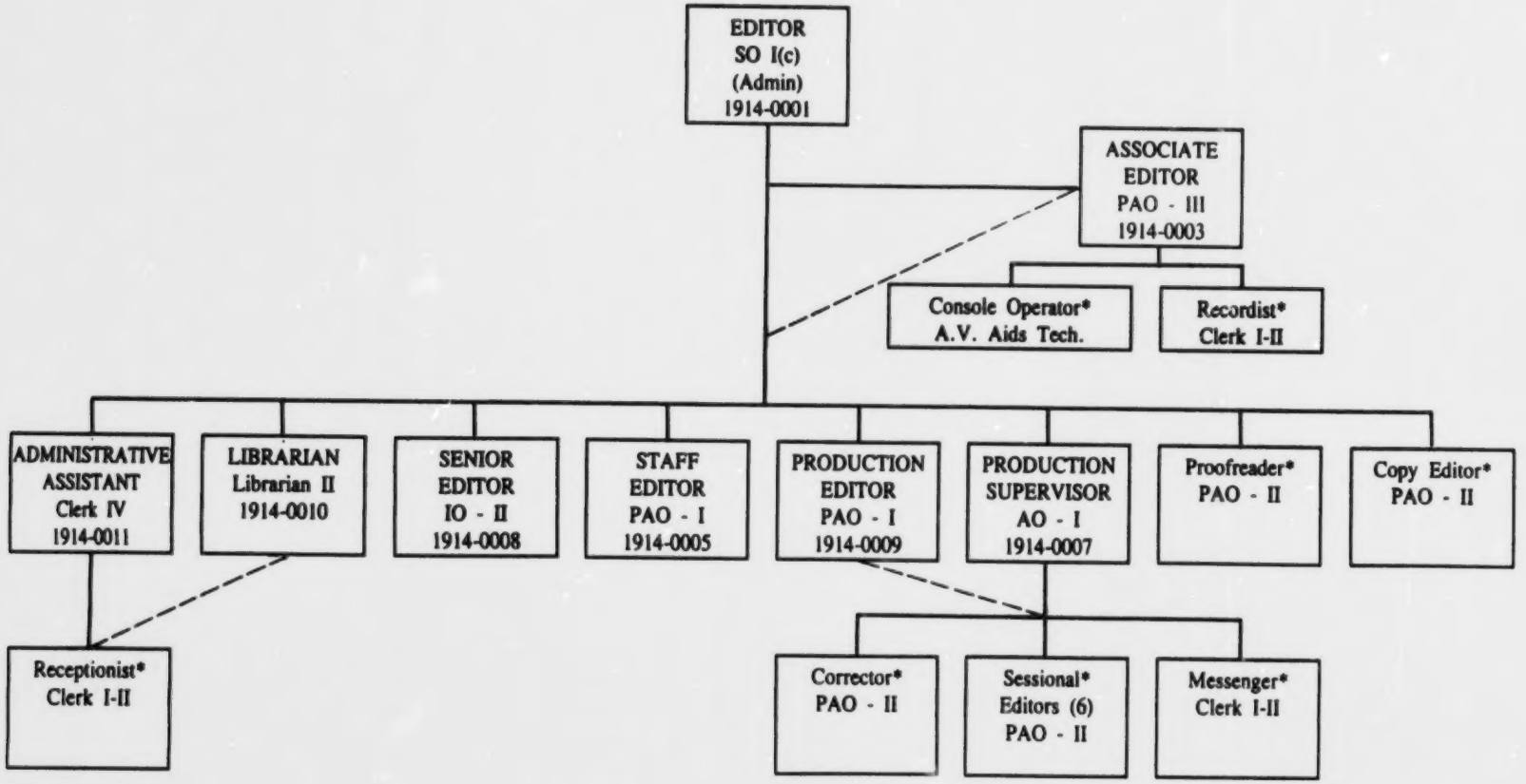
The new descriptions also incorporated some changes in duties. One such change that is worth noting is the addition to the Secretary's duties of transcribing and editing the proceedings of the House and its committees. As a result of a position audit subsequently conducted by the Personnel Administration Office, this position was reclassified from Clerk III to Clerk IV and the position renamed Administrative Assistant.

In conjunction with the review of position descriptions, a program of updating or creating operations manuals for each permanent and sessional position was undertaken and is expected to be completed early in 1986. These will help ensure that the essential

ALBERTA HANSARD

December 31, 1985

Organization Chart



* Indicates sessional employee

duties of each position will be carried out effectively should the incumbent not be available to do so.

A new practice which began in 1985 was the holding of regular staff meetings. Beginning February 27, meetings of the permanent staff were held approximately once each month and biweekly during session. In all, 16 such meetings were held in 1985.

During session some 13 temporary staff were hired on an hourly wage basis to augment the permanent staff, as has been Hansard practice. Some hourly staff were retained during nonsessional periods to assist in preparing transcripts of legislative committee proceedings or to perform other duties, as needed.

The revision of the duties performed by the Administrative Assistant permits the branch to reduce by one the number of sessional editorial staff that will be required and to hire instead, at a significantly lower rate of pay, a temporary receptionist to handle routine office duties during session.

The turnover rate among sessional editorial staff has averaged six per year for the last five years. Since the recruiting and training of new sessional editors has every year incurred considerable cost in staff time and taxpayer dollars, measures were being considered during 1985 by which this turnover might be reduced. Providing for the Administrative Assistant to perform this work both during session and whenever committee transcripts are being produced was one result of that process, and further steps toward reducing sessional editorial staff turnover have been proposed for implementation in 1986.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Hansard branch benefitted from the participation by six members of the permanent staff in various seminars and courses in 1985. The Production Supervisor, Carol Holowach, attended a two-day seminar on Coping with Stress December 18 and 19 and undertook as a self-study course in November the Basic OS/JCL program available

from Public Works, Supply and Services. Deirdre Grist, the Hansard Librarian, attended a half-course at the University of Alberta entitled Library Science 536, Advanced Information Services, twice weekly from mid-September to early December.

The Senior Editor, Vivian Loosemore, attended On the Job Training Methods September 25 to 27. Susan Martin, the Administrative Assistant, attended Coping with Stress on June 24 and 25. Lorraine Gibeault, the Staff Editor, attended Managing Time on June 24 and 25. The Editor, Gary Garrison, participated in the Management Development Course September 23 to 27 and in the Delegated Classification Course for Line Managers October 21 and 22.

CONFERENCES

The annual conference of the Hansard Association of Canada was held in Ottawa, Ontario, July 10 to 12. The Editor and Associate Editor attended, as did a total of 45 other delegates representing Canadian federal and provincial Hansards.

Six workshop discussions were held: Resource Material, Direct Input Shorthand Systems, Word Processing Hansard, French Language Hansard, Parliamentary Procedure, and 'Verbating' versus Vetting.

The Editor visited Toronto the day before the conference began in Ottawa and was able to observe the Ontario Legislature in session and the operation of Ontario Hansard and to discuss the latter at some length with Ontario Hansard staff.

The Editor attended the Syntopican XIII Conference of the Association of Information System Professionals in Washington, D.C., June 17 to 20. This conference provided a valuable opportunity to keep up to date on technical and administrative developments in the office automation field. The conference featured an exhibition of equipment and services by a variety of vendors and a series of working sessions which focussed on such subjects as Connecting Business Goals with System Plans, Office Automation Trends of the '80s, and Combatting Technostress.

Following the conference, the Editor visited the offices of the Congressional Record in both Houses of Congress and observed the Senate and the House of Representatives in session. He also observed the proceedings of a House committee and discussed with the Director the means used to produce transcripts for the 22 standing committees of the House as well as numerous ad hoc and special committees, some of which travel extensively throughout the country.

The Hansard Librarian participated in the Canadian Library Association Conference, which was held in Calgary June 13 to 18. This conference focussed on automation and computer use for librarians and featured presentations on The Making of the Canadian Encyclopedia and Electronic Publishing: the New Oxford English Dictionary.

PRODUCTION

The production of Hansard was carried out using the same procedures as were followed in 1984. The Hansard Blues continued to be telecommunicated to and printed at the Terrace Computing Centre. Hansard was once again typeset and printed by private-sector firms. Hansard proofs were printed in-house, as usual.

No equipment changes were made to the in-house text processing system. There was no downtime. There was a software update early in 1985. During the spring sittings an intermittent problem with the system resulted in repeated text. This problem appeared to have been resolved following testing and equipment checks by telecommunications technicians, the typesetter, and the vendor during the summer of 1985.

AUDIO EQUIPMENT

In early March, Hansard modernized the recording and transcribing equipment which had served the branch since its inception. The Revox A77 reel-to-reel recorders

were replaced with five Revox A710 cassette units to record sittings in the Chamber and 14 Sony BM-46 cassette transcribers to be used for transcribing and editing. In addition, two Sony BM-146 portable cassette recorders and a Sony TU-15 transfer unit were acquired to record committee meetings not held in the Chamber.

The ease of operation of cassettes compared with reel-to-reel tapes has provided greater reliability in the recording function and, together with the reverse time control on the transcriber unit, has significantly increased the speed of transcription. As well, much less space is required for tape storage and to house the transcriber units. It is anticipated that tape wear and stretching will be minimal and that it will be possible to recycle each cassette indefinitely.

The master audio tape of each sitting which is deposited with the Provincial Archives continues to be recorded on a three-hour reel-to-reel tape.

In November, all headphones used in the branch were updated to the light-weight Sennheiser HD 414 SL, which provides clear and natural stereo sound and a high degree of user comfort, an important consideration for staff who must wear them many hours a day.

BRANCH BUDGET

The financial statement on page 13 summarizes branch expenditures during the 1985 calendar year.

The 0.79 percent increase under salaries is largely due to the 3 percent cost-of-living increase, effective April 1, which was given to all employees of the Assembly and to all government employees. The Production Editor position was left vacant for over four months, resulting in some savings. Incremental increases for several members of the staff also had an impact on this expenditure area.

The 16.05 percent decrease in wage payments is a direct reflection of there having been no fall sittings in 1985; the number of sitting days in 1985 were down 20.3 percent from 1984.

A new policy of Treasury to charge long-term disability insurance premiums directly to each branch rather than covering them centrally drove employer contributions up.

Since there were no fall sittings, Hansard staff had a rare opportunity to participate in professional development courses, which is reflected in the increase under allowances and supplementary benefits.

Travel expenses were slightly higher due to the trip to Washington, D.C., described above under Conferences.

Freight and postage declined significantly from 1984 because there were no fall sittings in 1985. As well, postage costs in 1984 were higher than they otherwise would have been because a large bill for mailing the 1983 fall Hansards was paid in January 1984.

Due to a decision to purchase the office photocopier rather than to continue to lease it, the expenditure under rental of assets has decreased slightly.

The cost of telephone and telecommunication services declined somewhat due to a decision to purchase, instead of continuing to rent, the autodialer and the modem used to telecommunicate Hansard text to the typesetter.

On January 1, 1985, a new two-year typesetting and printing contract came into effect. The average actual cost per page for typesetting and printing was $73.89 in 1985, down slightly from the $75.27 average of 1984. Despite there having been 13 fewer sitting days in 1985 compared with 1984, the expenditure under professional, technical, and labour services was down only 4.93 percent. This occurred primarily because the number of pages printed per sitting day was 32.78, up 10.8 percent from the 29.56 in 1984.

The 36.76 percent decrease in the cost of data processing services is directly attributable to the lower number of sitting days in 1985 and the resulting reduction in the requirements for printing the Blues and for indexing.

Receiving a visit from a former Editor of the Hansard of India's lower federal House partially accounted for a slight increase in hospitality expenditure, and price increases as well as some additional volumes for the branch research centre accounted for the increase under materials and supplies.

The purchase of the modem and autodialer referred to above under telephone and telecommunications accounted for the bulk of the expenditure under purchase of office equipment; the rest was spent on a microwave oven for the use of staff who frequently work late into the night and have no access to food services either in the building or in the immediate vicinity.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

(January 1 to December 31, 1985)

	Total 1985	Comparable 1984	% Change from 1984
MANPOWER			
Salaries	226,160.85	224,398.42	+ 0.79
Wages	80,867.57	96,323.47	- 16.05
Payments to Contract Employees	1,867.42	7,922.99	- 76.43
Employer Contributions	27,269.64	25,329.25	+ 7.66
Allowances & Suppl. Benefits	1,277.13	1,062.10	+ 20.25
	337,442.61 (a)	355,036.23	- 4.96
SUPPLIES AND SERVICES			
Travel Expenses	4,808.02	4,555.98	+ 5.53
Freight & Postage	14,600.03	26,493.29	- 44.89
Rental of Assets	50,678.22	51,674.51	- 1.93
Telephone & Commun.	1,596.16	1,859.16	- 14.15
Repair & Maintenance	19,076.44	19,196.00	- 0.62
Profess., Tech., & Labour Services	146,159.32	153,736.90	- 4.93
Data Processing Services	11,910.06	18,833.32	- 36.76
Hospitality	120.50	86.40	+ 39.47
Materials & Supplies	7,439.15	5,528.16	+ 34.57
Purchase of Off. Equip.	1,262.88		+ 100.00
	257,650.70 (b)	276,963.72	- 6.97
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	595,093.31 (a+b)	631,999.95	- 5.84

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Editor is grateful to Mr. Speaker and the Clerk for their continued support for and confidence in the Hansard branch throughout 1985; to David Greer, who served as Editor until January 18, 1985; to Robert Bubba, Clerk Assistant and former Editor, for his helpful advice; to the Legislature Librarian and all the staff of the Legislature Library for their valuable assistance, particularly in locating difficult-to-find research materials; to the Director of Administration and his staff for their help in financial and personnel matters; and to all Members of the Legislative Assembly and their staffs for their help in verifying the accuracy of spellings and quotations.

The Editor is also grateful to all the Hansard staff for their dedication and commitment to ensure that Hansard publications continue to meet the standards of excellence to which Members and the public have grown accustomed and for their assistance in compiling this annual report.